

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

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Y 4. SE 2:103-2-15

Implementation of the Helsinki Acco...

## HEARING BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS SECOND SESSION

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RUSSIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

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MAY 24, 1994

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Printed for the use of the  
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe  
[CSCE 103-2-15]



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## RUSSIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

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TUESDAY, MAY 24, 1994

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

*Washington, DC.*

The commission met, pursuant to call, in room 2226, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, at 9 a.m., Hon. Dennis DeConcini, Chairman, presiding.

Present: Hon. Dennis DeConcini, Chairman, Hon. Steny H. Hoyer, Co-Chairman, and Hon. Frank McCloskey.

Also present: James Collins, Paul Goble, and Ronald Grigor Suny.

Chairman DECONCINI. The Commission on Security and Cooperation will come to order. I want to welcome everyone for being here today. Co-Chairman Steny Hoyer is on his way and will be here shortly.

This is a very important hearing and a very timely hearing in my judgment. The subject, of course, is Russia's relations with its neighbors. For quite a while, the United States and Western governments, when evaluating Russia's progress towards democratic reform, have stressed the centrality of economic criteria, such as privatization, the rate of inflation, currency emission, and subsidies to enterprises. Unfortunately, less attention has been paid to Moscow's policies vis-a-vis its neighbors as an indicator of a willingness to move away from old patterns and policies.

Many commentators, and this Senator in particular, have been disturbed by this tendency. Former National Security Advisor Dr. Brzezinski has argued that Russia can either be an empire or democratic but it cannot be both. I share that view and believe it ought to be the basis of our policy towards Russia.

That does not mean, of course, that security and economic agreements reached voluntarily through bilateral negotiations between Russia and its neighbors, or even a confederation among several or all of them, are inherently bad, nor would they necessarily threaten the United States and Western interests.

Russia and its neighbors have a long history, which has both good and bad aspects. They are bound by economic interests in a web of mutually dependent relationships.

The problem arises when the strongest of these states, namely Russia, uses its military or economic might to compel weaker neighbors to enter into political, security, or economic relationships that they did not seek but could not evade. A Russia that imposes itself on its neighbors will encounter resistance.

This will necessitate devoting large resources to a coercive apparatus, which will strengthen government agencies specializing in

repression and will undermine prospects of democratization. Nor will such a policy result in the stability Moscow says it wants and is trying to protect.

This has obvious implications for U.S. interests, which hopes to see a democratic Russia that does not threaten its neighbors. Even where Moscow does not try to undermine its neighbors, Russia's rhetoric and actions could encourage certain groups and individuals with their own agendas to involve Russia in conflicts it may earnestly want to avoid over territorial disputes and self-determination.

Situations could arise where the tail is truly wagging the dog, as may be happening right now in the dangerous triangular relationship among Crimea, Ukraine, and Russia.

Given the significance of the topic, I am especially pleased by the caliber of the experts that we have here today. Our first witness will be James Collins, who is a Senior Coordinator, Office of the Ambassador at Large for the New Independent States, the Department of State. Mr. Collins, a career Foreign Service Officer, was the Deputy Chief of Mission in Moscow from October 1990 to November of 1993.

Our other witnesses I'll introduce at the time that they come up. At this time I'll yield to the Co-Chairman, Mr. Hoyer.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much.

Mr. Collins and other witnesses, we very much appreciate your being here. Jim Collins and I have had an opportunity to work together on many occasions and on a number of my visits to the former Soviet Union, to Moscow. He is truly one of America's most knowledgeable and most talented foreign policy experts. And I'm very glad that he's here.

Mr. COLLINS. Thank you.

Co-Chairman HOYER. I've been looking forward to this hearing. I think it's an important subject, the issue of whether Moscow can overcome centuries of imperial behavior towards its non-Russian neighbors and develop with them a relationship of equals which will promote their collective security and prosperity.

As you know, Mr. Collins and Mr. Chairman, I recently returned from Russia, where Majority Leader Gephardt and Minority Leader Michel led a bipartisan delegation of members to study the current situation there. I came back, as I think all members of the delegation did, concerned about Russia's economic prospects and about policies toward what Russia calls the "Near Abroad."

Moscow appears to be engaged in the construction of a sphere of influence over the entire former Soviet Union, which subsumes military security, border control, and political and economic domination, though the levels may vary in different newly independent states.

To pursue these ends, Moscow has proclaimed its right to protect Russians in the non-Russian newly independent states. Obviously I don't expect Moscow to forget about Russians in neighboring countries. They ought not to, and they will not. But we wonder whether Moscow is more concerned about human rights or geostrategic interests.

Defense Minister Grachev and Foreign Minister Kozyrev have openly declared that Russia must not give up positions won over

centuries, ignoring the fact that these positions are now in independent countries.

Today Moscow is pressing its neighbors to introduce dual citizenship, which would give Russia legal grounds for interfering in the affairs of its neighbors, as opposed to claiming the right to defend people in foreign countries merely because they speak the state language of Russia.

The Romanov Empire broke up in 1917. Four years later, after a bloody revolution and civil war, it was largely reconstituted as the Soviet Union. In 1991 the USSR collapsed and many people thought the empire was gone for good. Today the empire is striking back in some ways. I hope our witnesses will provide a historical perspective on the trends we see unfolding.

Is Russia destined to try and dominate its neighbors, regardless of the form of government in Moscow, or can democracy and decentralization influence Russia's attitude and behavior towards them? And what are the implications for U.S.-Russian relations and the answers to these questions?

As I said, I look forward to hearing from Mr. Collins and Mr. Goble and Dr. Suny on these issues.

Chairman DECONCINI. Congressman McCloskey?

Mr. McCLOSKEY. No statement.

Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Collins, would you please proceed with your summary of your statement?

**TESTIMONY OF JAMES COLLINS, SENIOR COORDINATOR, OFFICE OF THE AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES, DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Co-Chairman. It's a pleasure to be here today.

I have worked on many occasions with members of this Commission when I was in Moscow and in other capacities. And I can tell you that my respect for the work of the Commission across the former Soviet Union is very, very great. You have played an extremely important role in a variety of ways in building democracy and in the evolution of events in that part of the world.

Mr. Chairman, I think a major goal of U.S. policy toward the New Independent States is to promote the observance of CSCE principles throughout that region.

To reach this goal requires both a unified and a comprehensive approach to the problems of the region and policies tailored to the individual countries of the region. These policies need to enhance the freedom, independence, and sovereignty of each of these states as full members of the CSCE community.

Achieving that goal is not going to be easy. Each of you has referred to trends and tendencies that challenge reformers and reform. It is true that we believe reformed foreign policy is as much as part of a reform process as economic transformation and democratization.

A key factor in affecting the degree of success we achieve in attaining our goals for the region is going to be the policies and actions of the Russian government. It's a fact.

By its sheer size, economic resources, and political military weight, Russia carries a disproportionate share of influence and re-

sponsibility for the development of events in the former Soviet Union.

In light of this reality and a history of imperial rule by those who controlled Moscow, it is understandable that Russia's neighbors have concerns, worries about its intentions and its actions. These concerns are only heightened today by nationalists, the neo-communist challenges to the supporters of reform in Russia and the New Independent States.

The conflicts on Russia's periphery, in particular, threatens stability and endangers the reform process throughout the region and the independence of the states they affect.

Russia, like other states of the region, does experience the effects of this unrest. The regional interdependence and instability stemming from economic dislocation and deep-seated ethnic and territorial rivalries, suspicions about Russian designs and heightened domestic demands for Russian assertiveness, therefore, are shaping the environment in which Russian leaders are finding they have to work to develop relationships with other states of the former Soviet Union.

None of these circumstances, however, detract from our conviction that the interests of Russia and its neighbors in the region will be fully well-served by observing the principles that govern and have been developed by CSCE.

None of such circumstances—and I want to emphasize this—in any way justify unilateral military intervention, economic coercion, or political intimidation by Russia or any other state against its neighbors.

When we have found Russian behavior in the regions tending in these directions or raising questions, we have brought this to the attention of the Russian government, and we will continue to do so.

We are also doing what we can to assist the Nations of the former Soviet Union to try to build their independence. Indeed, the touchstone of our policy—and I think this goes back from the breakup of the Soviet Union in my experience—has been that the key interest of the United States is to promote and develop the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of the new states of the former Soviet Union. That is really the base. We have done this, I think, in three different ways.

We have focused, first, on some preventive diplomacy, where we could. We had some successes. In the Baltics, Russian troops are withdrawing. We hope that we will achieve the final withdrawal from Estonia. That can be negotiated through agreements.

The achievement of the agreement between Russia, Ukraine, and ourselves has moved us toward a substantial easing of tensions over the nuclear issue surrounding Ukraine.

At the same time we've tried to support efforts at multilateral diplomacy to deal with bringing settlement to these regional conflicts that are so destructive. We have supported the CSCE effort to negotiate settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh. We are working with the U.N. on Georgia and Abkhaz. We are supporting the U.N.'s efforts in Tajikistan.

We have also tried to bolster the independence of these states in other tangible ways by giving them ties to the outside world and to us: Partnership for Peace, economic programs which bring them

into the world of financial and trading systems. These efforts provide essentially the essence of independence, which are options other than looking to Moscow for their trade, security, and other relationships with the rest of the world.

Finally, I would simply sum up to say that in the recent trip I concluded, which took me to four of the states, in Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, one thing struck me as particularly important. That was the degree to which each of the leadership in those countries sought to preserve its own independence. They have different problems. They deal with them in different ways. And they have different degrees of severity in confronting them.

But I would say to you I was struck in each case by the determination of the leaders to find ways to live not just as members of a former empire, but as members of the CSCE community. And I think that gives us hope, it gives us something to work with, and I would welcome your questions about where we're going.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you, Mr. Collins. Mr. Collins, in your judgment, is Russia trying to reestablish the Russian empire? Is that goal not a public pronouncement? Is that really what is going on there? And it seems to me that's what they're doing, even though they're not saying so. But I may be wrong. And if so, or if not so, should they be allowed to be peacekeepers, as Mr. Yeltsin has proposed?

Mr. COLLINS. Let me address the empire question first because I think it's central to everything we're talking about. The answer to the question that I have is: I do not believe that they are seeking to reestablish the empire as we knew it before the Soviet Union, dissolved.

At the same time I think there is certainly a spectrum of opinion across the Russian political spectrum which probably ranges from those who would like to go back to 1850, if not 1950. And we certainly have a great stake in those people not becoming the ones who will dominate Russian policy.

We have in power in Russia a group of people who have rejected empire. The stated policies of the Russian government under President Yeltsin are very clear that they support the CSCE principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence for the new states of the former Soviet Union.

I think it was very important, for instance, in January, that as part of the signature of the trilateral documents that were done in Moscow, Russia once again affirmed its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Now, that said, the dissolution of empire, which is what's going on there, is a very complex and very difficult process. There is no question that there are elements in Russia, both in the sort of traditional political, military, security and in the economic world, each of whom regrets in a very profound way the kinds of connections and controls that they once enjoyed to gain advantage in parts of the former Soviet Union that are now outside their control.

At the same time, I think we need to be in a position to encourage the right instincts and the right policies by being very firm that we intend to treat and expect Russia to treat these New Independent States as exactly that.

And, we have been pursuing a policy that's consistent in that regard. We do not deal with, for instance, issues in Armenia through Moscow. We deal with Armenia.

We took any number of steps early on to try to ensure that each of these new states understands that we regard them as independent and sovereign and will continue to do that.

Chairman DECONCINI. What about peacekeepers? Then there's no reason not to—

Mr. COLLINS. The peacekeeping issue is a very complex one for us. It presents us with some real difficulties. But I think the premise which should guide us is the following: that these are independent states, that they are members of the United Nations, and they are members of CSCE.

If there are to be any peacekeeping operations done by any party, whether it's Russia or the other outsiders or members of the CIS, then it has to be, number one, something that is voluntarily accepted by the parties who are involved.

Any effort to sort of invade or impose it I think is destined—I would agree with you. You're not going to get long-term stability out of that.

Chairman DECONCINI. Before I yield to Congressman Hoyer, what about the troops in, say, Tajikistan? Are they in your judgment peacekeepers or are they in there to settle a civil war? That's just one example.

Mr. COLLINS. At this particular time, the Russian government has stated to us and I believe is, in fact, pursuing a policy of trying to produce a political settlement of that conflict.

At the same time, the military that is there is playing a role which, in essence, as I understand it and our information gives it to us, is essentially trying to prevent across-the-border operations from Afghanistan in the first instance and to do what it can to prevent outbreaks of renewed fighting.

It's probably fair to say also that if one goes back through the whole history of that involvement, there have been times when they have been less than impartial. Indeed, they may still be somewhat less than impartial.

But I think the key point is, as we talk to the United Nations representative working that negotiation, he believes they are working constructively in support of getting a political settlement.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you.

Congressman Hoyer?

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me say initially, as I said, when I came back from Russia, I think there was a united feeling within the delegation that the continued stability and the efforts that the United States is making to assist Russia in maintaining internal stability and economic progress are critical. This will not only internally stabilize the political situation, but also to some degree weaken the Zhirinovskys and other nationalists who seek to recreate an empire.

We hold these hearings in that context. Obviously it's my proposition, I think you've said the same, that to the extent that Russia is internally stable, the less chance there is of her being externally more bellicose.

Let me ask you some questions—first of all, on this subject. Spheres of influence have always been a concept which we have had in international relations.

It underlies our Monroe Doctrine. I do not make an analogy, but we have had it. Clearly England has historically had it, France and other countries. To some degree Russia is obviously trying to maintain that premise.

Mr. Collins, I would like your view of how the old concept fits in with the new concept of a new world order presumably premised upon international cooperative efforts as through the United Nations. What are we seeing with this concept?

Mr. COLLINS. Well, first of all, as a matter of sort of basic principle we reject spheres of influence. If we define them to mean the ability of some large power, in a sense to start creating exclusive preserves that can give it the authority to exclude others from the affairs of neighboring, and supposedly independent, states.

And in that sense, I believe we certainly reject the idea that Russia, however big, however powerful, has the right to define somehow an exclusivity of activity or relationship with this part of the world that was the former Soviet Union.

Now, that said, it's also true that the interest of Russia in, let's say, central Asia is probably much greater than it is in Jamaica. And I don't think that we can deny that fact and that reality. They have economic ties, political ties that go back over centuries and that simple geography dictates that they are going to have a more intimate relationship with these states than even ourselves.

Now, that said, I think that what we have sought to do is to make clear to Russia and, indeed, the government of President Yeltsin has accepted that as independent states, these new states are going to have relationships with the outside world that benefit them. And that their leaders should have the right and, indeed, the ability to exercise their judgments about what is good for their people.

So, for example, if they decide that they wish to join Partnership for Peace, they should do so. And many have. If they wish to have a security relationship with us, between our military and their military, they should have that right. We are pursuing that. And many have established that.

Similarly, with economics, which I think is a very basic issue here, many of the more modern thinking people who talk about influence in Russia, Russians, say "It's not the old kind. You know, we're going to take an equity position in"—for example—"the oil of this area."

Well, part of our basic premise on that—and it's what we have said to them and to the New Independent States—is, of course, you can arrive at freely decided arrangements, but they ought to be consistent with such regimes as the GATT trading regime and not provide the basis for exclusivity. Certainly, economic coercion should not be a part of the way you define those things.

I think we are doing what we can by negotiating trade agreements, investment treaties, and so forth, with these new states to provide them options. That's what we can appropriately do and we should do.

Co-Chairman HOYER. To what degree do you think the West as we relate to the former states of the Soviet Union, now independent states, influences Russian policy?

In other words, what does our view of those relationships do to policymakers in Russia? Complicate their lives? Are they interested in our view? What influence does it have?

Mr. COLLINS. Well, I think that the views of the United States or of NATO or of the Western institutions, if we want to call them that, play a very substantial role in the broad calculus of, if you will, the sort of strategic view of Russia and where it's going.

I believe that President Yeltsin and his government have made and continue to adhere to one basic premise, and that is that Russia wants to join the rest of the world, rather than turn in on itself: go back to self-isolation.

There are plenty of pressures to go that way, but I believe Yeltsin and his leadership have continued to adhere to the idea that they want to be members of the international community. In that sense, that is a priority.

With respect to activism by the Russian government, the extent to which we say "Look, this is not acceptable" or "This is acceptable" as a way to behave if you wish to become a responsible member of this community has weight.

It doesn't mean that Russia will always agree with this. They will not. They're going to be a great power, and they are. We are going to have differences, just as we do with many other states, but I think we need to continue to press for sort of the minimal bounded rules of the game that I think are best embodied in CSCE.

Co-Chairman HOYER. With respect to CSCE principles, do you believe our current policy, or the perception in Russia of our policy, is the same if you take the extremes of the Transcaucasian former republics and the Baltics?

Obviously my perception is that the United States position on the Baltics is pretty clear and emphatic and has historically always been so since incorporation in the 1940's. There is a much less clear view in my opinion in the Congress and clearly among the American public with respect to the Central Asian republics, for instance.

Is that, do you think, accurate? Is it perceived in Russia, to be accurate, so that there is a different test standard of CSCE principles applied to the Baltics, which we never perceived to be really a part of the Soviet Union in any legal way, and the other republics as you go East, if you will?

Mr. COLLINS. I think there are sort of two separate elements to this. We have made it as clear as we possibly can and we continue to do so. We consider all of these states to be sovereign, independent. We respect their territorial integrity, and we expect others to do so. That is the stated policy.

I don't think there should be any ambiguity in that. It's been embodied in statements from Christmas Day 1991, when the Soviet Union broke up and we began to recognize each of these states in turn and set up embassies and so forth.

I think it's another question if you ask: What is their perception about the degree to which United States or other Europeans or other members of the international community are prepared to de-

vote resources to act on challenges to that principle? And, to be quite blunt, I suspect there is a different view based on experience.

We have held a view for a long time, as you say, about the Baltics. The Baltics also by geography are located in a very important part of the world for western Europe and its security.

I think it is difficult to say the same if you look at the resources that historically the United States or Western Europe have been prepared to devote to Central Asia. It is not an area in which we have asserted or, more importantly, invested substantial resources.

Now, that is not in any way to suggest that we are, therefore, somehow not supporting the right of those states to their independence. What it is saying is that I think the Russians certainly do exist, they behave in that part of the world. They have a somewhat different calculus than they do in Latvia.

Now, we are doing what we can to ensure that they don't misinterpret that because there will be implications, it seems to me, inevitably for our relations, and for the relations of Russia with the rest of the world if they begin to act, quite simply, imperially.

You know, I have a certain degree of understanding having watched Russian television, as you perhaps did. When they see daily the kind of slaughter that goes on in Nagorno-Karabakh or in Georgia or however it's portrayed, there is a sort of impetus there to do something about this. We used to go to vacation in Cecumium, and I heard that from any number of people. Now they're killing people.

I think one has to expect the leadership in Moscow to be responsible about that. We have welcomed the fact that they have come to the international community and said, "We invite the U.N. to provide a peacekeeping force if it can be worked out."

I received assurances in my trip last week that if it is a decision that the Russian and CIS will provide peacekeepers, they will provide them with transparency and work with the U.N. to make that happen. They're negotiating, in fact, today in New York over what may be possible in Abkhaz.

But I think the key point is we simply will not in a sense qualify principle over the fact that these are independent states.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Collins, let me just ask you this follow-up question. Do we have a policy with respect to Russia's efforts to renegotiate the CFE treaties, especially in the southern part of the former Soviet Union?

Mr. COLLINS. Yes. First of all, this is a multilateral treaty. And the one thing we've told them, despite some of the sort of implied effort, is that this is not something we're going to decide bilaterally. This is an issue which involves all of the signatories and participants in this treaty.

Secondly, we have said to them it is not our view nor is it our policy to have any steps taken to reopen this treaty or renegotiate. So whatever is done needs to be done within the framework—

Chairman DECONCINI. Of the existing treaty.

Mr. COLLINS. —of the existing treaty. That basically reflects also a judgment that we would open up an extremely complex negotiation.

Chairman DECONCINI. And you're satisfied that they see it that way?

Mr. COLLINS. I am not satisfied that they have made up their minds, no, about that. We certainly have told them, and not only we. In my talks in Turkey, they were very firm about the fact that that is their position. That's what they have been telling them, for instance.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you.

Congressman McCloskey?

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Senator.

Obviously there's so much to talk about here, and my expertise is very moderate. But you seem to have a more benign or confident aura or description of Russian intentions and actions at various times than I have felt over the months, particularly let's take a look at Georgia.

I had the feeling that the Russians were working very hard to de-stabilize and, in essence, terrorize Mr. Shevardnadze's hope for a peace and a more or less unified country. There, of course, given the power dynamic, I guess Shevardnadze is a "happy" player on the team right now.

I know less about it, but see this 43-year-old Russian army paratroop general floating around Moldova presiding in some strange way. Solzhenitsyn moving back into Moscow, expressing his concerns for the Russians and the Near Abroad. I mean, do you really think it's that benign or non-problematic?

And let's take the Georgia situation. Did we really express forcefully any major concern for Shevardnadze's and Georgia's autonomy there?

Mr. COLLINS. Well, let me start with Georgia. I met just last week for an hour and a half with Shevardnadze. And I reaffirmed what we have said to him all along, which is that we do not accept any effort to de-stabilize or somehow truncate Georgia's territorial integrity and independence.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'm sorry. Could you repeat that? I had a slight—

Mr. COLLINS. We do not accept any efforts by anybody to de-stabilize Georgia or to limit its independence or to change its territorial integrity.

Now, he said to me, "Look, what I would like most of all at this time would be a full-scale peacekeeping force from the U.N., a regular blue-hatted peacekeeping force." This is what he said to us when he came here in February. He would prefer not to have, even if the Russians were participating, anyone other than the U.N. in charge.

That said, he said, "I'm also realistic. I realize that the United Nations is probably not going to be in a position, given the difficulties of negotiating with the other parties involved, to do that."

What he asked for, however, was anything that could be done to support from the U.N. the limits and so forth and definitions of a mandate for any peacekeeping, whether Russia, CIS, or whatever, that he felt he was going to have to accept in order to preserve his independence and the territorial integrity of Georgia.

Now, he said have to accept from Russia. I can't read his mind why he feels he has to. He felt that the situation he finds himself

in politically in Georgia with 300,000 refugees and a deteriorating situation politically from his point of view, that he needs to move on this issue. And the Russians had come to him, and Yeltsin and he had agreed on a framework to do that.

We certainly are well-aware of all the reports and so forth of Russian activities in Georgia back over the past two years. And there certainly is evidence that there was misbehavior by Russian elements in various times.

I think what we can do is to try to support Shevardnadze in his determination to remain independent, to work as best we can with the U.N., CSCE, any other organizations we can to support him, but I also would like to give you another observation, which is, that I found a very big difference between, let us say, Moldova and Georgia in one very basic respect. I found the Moldovan government at this point quite determined and united in their decisions and in their determination to pursue reform and to negotiate out the issues that have to do with the Russian presence there in the 14th Army.

And they were reasonably optimistic they could do that. I didn't find that kind of optimism in Georgia because I didn't find that kind of unity behind his government.

Similarly, just as an observation, when I went to Armenia I found a united people determined to be a nation and to preserve their independence. And I think they will.

In Azerbaijan, you found a much more divided quality under much greater pressures.

In short, the other thing I would like to say to you is that one of the critical factors that is a reality for us is that the degree to which we can support the independence and sovereignty of these states depends, in part, on their own abilities to have a coherent people and a coherent government.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Maybe just one other question, Mr. Chairman. Briefly, Mr. Collins, might you comment on whether Zhirinovsky is going to prosper or fade, but, particularly, if you could underlie that with any kind of statement or prediction or advice as far as post-Yeltsin national political leadership in Russia?

Obviously Yeltsin's days are numbered right now. '96 is going to be here before you know it. If he's courageous and charismatic, he's also transitional and not quite modern in the post-communist sense right now.

But are they going to have dynamic political leadership capable of development of a broad base and keeping stability and momentum going in that country?

Mr. COLLINS. Well, you're asking me to do a kind of crystal ball—

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Surely.

Mr. COLLINS. —that I'm not sure I can do that, but let me give you my own sense.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I'm not asking you to be 100 percent correct.

Mr. COLLINS. No. Even 60 percent would be pretty good.

It seems to, first of all, President Yeltsin is the president. He's got some more time left. I think it's clear that he is still a major political figure there. And so I do not suggest that—

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I didn't mean that he was not.

Mr. COLLINS. Also he is keeping things ambiguous enough so that I wouldn't suggest he's completely a lame duck at this point. And I think he remains a factor.

But your real question, I think, is about the extremes. It's not just Zhirinovsky. It's also the other group, I mean, the Rutskois of the world who are pushing for restoration of the old order.

My personal observation is that I don't think either of those extremes at this point has a kind of majority support that is going to put them in charge of the country. It doesn't mean they couldn't gather it, but I don't think they have it now.

What I am concerned about, frankly, is a personal deep conviction that I think I know how you can create the conditions that will produce an extremist outcome sooner or later, and that is to begin to cut the Russians off from the rest of the world and make them feel that they cannot prosper or have their interests addressed within a responsible international context.

I can't guarantee that if we preserve that, if you will, open hand from the countries of the world to Russia and sort of insist that in order to work with us you also need to observe certain parameters on your behavior that will succeed, but I can almost guarantee that if we build the walls and begin to throw them on to their own resources, what we will do is simply reinforce the Rutskois and Zhirinovskys in their arguments.

Their arguments are usually quite simple. Every time we have tried to work with anybody in the outside world, they have taken advantage of us or they have tried to destroy us. We can only count on ourselves. We can only build our own defenses.

The history of Russia and its empire essentially was the history of the martialing of resources behind a military establishment. It goes way back.

What we need to do is ensure that we do not somehow foster the belief amongst the bulk of the Russian people that that is their only alternative.

So while I can't do the crystal ball perhaps to your satisfaction completely and I certainly don't minimize the importance of these tendencies and the danger of them, I think we do have an opportunity to shape the way the outcome purges.

And, I think that, essentially, is to ensure that Russia and all of these other states feel that they have a place in the world which does not require them to fall back on, if you will, autarchy and a militarist sort of sense of survival in order to protect their being.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Collins, thank you very much. It's extremely helpful for the Commission's perspective, and I want to thank you for your long-time involvement in this area and your service to the United States and the Foreign Service.

Mr. COLLINS. Thanks very much.

Chairman DECONCINI. We'll now proceed with Mr. Paul Goble, who is a Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where he is a specialist on the Soviet successor states.

He was previously the Special Advisor on Soviet Nationality Problems to the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, and the Desk Officer for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania at the State De-

partment. I understand just returned from Estonia with a few broken ribs. I hope you're all right, but that's a tough place to get broken ribs, I'll bet.

Also we'll have Ron Suny, who a professor in the History Department at the University of Michigan. He's an expert on Transcaucasia. He has written several books on Russian and Soviet history, most recently *The Revenge of the Past: National Revolution and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here with us today.

Would you please begin, Mr. Goble, and summarize your statement?

**TESTIMONY OF PAUL GOBLE, SENIOR ASSOCIATE AT THE  
CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE**

Mr. GOBLE. Mr. Chairman, I'm doubly delighted to be here, both because I think it is an important topic to be discussed and also because, as you noted, the accident almost made sure I would not be here.

Most of the discussion of this issue has been blurred by the fact that we are getting conflicting reports from Moscow about two apparently contradictory developments: first, the general collapse of state authority within the Russian Federation; and, second, the reassertion of Russian power over her new neighbors.

Because these things are both being reported, each is used by those who see the other as not being true as a basis for proving that it is not true. Russia obviously cannot be a threat to her neighbors if she is falling apart. And if she is reasserting her power abroad, then that means she's not falling apart at home.

In fact, as I think everyone is increasingly coming to realize, this contradiction is more apparent than real. In fact, it is precisely because of the difficulties of Russia at home that Russia is becoming a threat to her immediate neighbors, the former republics of the former Soviet Union, and not the other way around. And, consequently, I think it's terribly important that we pay attention to this issue because too often the discussion has been incredibly primitive.

This morning I'd like to put forward three questions and provide what I see as some preliminary answers. First, let us look at just exactly what is happening between Russia and the states around her borders.

Secondly, what are the consequences of Russian action in these states likely to be, not only for Russia and her neighbors, but for us as well?

And, finally, what can and should we do to promote our interests and values in this region?

Now, I'm talking about the reassertion of Russian power around Russian borders. I don't think anyone would deny that she is reasserting her power. The question is: How?

There has been an incredibly primitive quality to the discussion, and I think we need to realize that there are three parts to this problem.

The first is, with regard to Moscow's intentions, we face a problem, to use the words of Gertrude Stein, that there is "no there there," that Moscow is not a unified entity. It does not speak with

one voice. And whenever they quote one source in Moscow, someone else will be around to tell you that he's not who we say it is, including even the president of the country, as we saw on April 5th.

Second, and related to the first, there is a "say and do" problem. Whenever Russian officials do something we don't like, we're told by supporters of Mr. Yeltsin that he tried to do something else. And when Mr. Yeltsin says something that's inappropriate for the world today in the international community, we are told, "Don't listen to what they've said. Watch what they do." It's obviously a very difficult situation in which to react.

And, third, there's a tendency to oversimplify in dealing with the problem. Some people will think any reassertion of Russian power is imperialism and, therefore, will neglect the view that Russia has legitimate and real interests in the countries around its borders. There are people, especially in this town, who argue that precisely because Yeltsin and Kozyrev have never used the word "empire," that, consequently, there is no problem at all.

I think that this has all been exacerbated by a tendency, which we've seen so often, to treat the question as a series of bilateral relationships, rather than that of a general problem.

Is there a way out? I think we can get out of this problem, and I would suggest three steps. First, we should stop our fixation on the word "empire." We should stop and see: What has that man done, and what has that man said?

To the extent that we stay on the word "empire," we get into a self-promoting intellectual argument, with each side claiming what empire exists and what empire doesn't and we're driven into a dead-end blind alley.

Second, I think we have to look at exactly what's being done. It may very well be that not everything that happens reflects the views of Mr. Yeltsin, but they're on his watch and he has to bear some responsibility for them.

And, finally, we should be looking at a series of policy arenas, rather than at the specific bilateral relationships themselves. I think it's important to look at these areas of policy, which are more general, and I would like to suggest five very briefly.

First, economic pressure. Obviously, Russia has legitimate economic interests in these countries, but we need to recognize that what Moscow has done has been hardly the behavior of a normal international state existing in the international environment.

If it had simply imposed world prices on everything, that would be one thing. In fact, it has been highly selective, and it has used this as a lever for political purposes. If you agree with what Moscow wants to do, you will get low prices; if you don't, other ones. And that's been consistent.

Moscow has insisted that all the energy supplies from Central Asia and the Caucasus flow through Russia. Indeed, a month ago, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Economic Relations of the Russian Federation said that Turkmenistan would not be allowed, would not be allowed, to export oil and gas beyond the borders of the Commonwealth because that would represent a threat to Russia's economic interests. That again is not exactly the behavior of two states in a normal international relationship.

Second, there's been military pressure. Troops have been deployed and used in Moldova, Tajikistan, and Georgia against the initial interests, as expressed, of the governments involved. If you allow me to put an army in a country that doesn't have an army, I will quickly get that government to ask me in.

Georgia is a classic case of the interjection of power and then the use of that power to extract an invitation. And we see to this day that the Russians are now claiming that they never invaded or incorporated the three Baltic countries because they were asked in. No, they weren't.

And this use of military presence has failed to elicit from the West all too often a response that this is inappropriate. Indeed, one can quote a number of statements by American and West European leaders that the behavior of the Russians in Georgia has been stabilizing, which I think is just fundamentally false.

Third, there have been regular efforts by the Russians to politically isolate these countries, to insist that these remain part of Russia's sphere of influence, to demand that the West recognizes legitimate Russian defined peacekeeping, to ask a blessing for that peacekeeping by the international community but with Russia defining it.

And, indeed, I would argue that the recent behavior of Russian representatives in discussing the Partnership for Peace is only the latest indication that Russia believes it can flout the rules and turn the Partnership for Peace, which was designed to give aid and comfort to the East Europeans, against precisely those people.

Fourth are the human rights issues which this committee and the CSCE have done so much about, so much good for. The fact is that the Russian government has routinely misrepresented the situation.

There are indeed 25.4 million ethnic Russians living outside the Russian Federation, but, as the Russian Foreign Ministry itself has made clear, only 150,000 of them are citizens of the Russian Federation.

There is a fundamental difference between protecting one's citizens abroad through consular activity and the assertion that ethnicity is more important than citizenship, which subverts the international order now just as much as it did 60 years ago in Western Europe.

And, finally, linkage issues. There has been a repeated insistent pattern of using any one of these issues to get more political leverage. Even when Russian behavior has been welcome on its face, it has been used to achieve the restoration of Russian influence and control.

I would argue that recent Russian actions in the Karabakh dispute are a case in point. Even if one welcomes what Russia has done to try to bring the parties together, Russian demands for bases and other benefits in Azerbaijan against the interests, expressed interests, of the Azerbaijani government can hardly be welcome.

Can we, then, say that Russia is seeking to reimpose a single imperial state? No, not right now. The evidence for that isn't there. But can we say that Moscow wishes to dominate these countries in ways that we would find inappropriate and inconsistent with inter-

national law if any other state on the face of the earth were doing it? Absolutely yes. And, therefore, I think it's important to take this discussion beyond the word "empire" and take it to the question of what has happened.

Now, if we go down this road, there are going to be three victims, not one. The first and most obvious victim is going to be the new countries, which are going to see their freedom of action and even independence suppressed and where you will see two developments in these countries, both of which will be unwelcome.

The first will be a collaborationist tendency, but the other, and more dangerous, will be an increasing nationalism, and extremist nationalism, in some of these countries as they seek to resist, regional arms races.

The second victim, however, should disturb us even more, and that is Russia itself, for if Russia again becomes an empire in any form, that will preclude the possibilities of making the transitions toward democracy and a free market economy that we all hope for.

I'm proud to say that I wrote a decade ago that a liberal Russia might be possible, but that a liberal Soviet Union was a contradiction in terms. We've seen that happen under Gorbachev. The effort to square that circle does not work. It will not work in the future either.

Moreover, it is not entirely clear that Russia would succeed in being able to restore its power, but the process of trying will create chaos and dangers for all involved.

And, finally, the victim will be us in the West, not only our hopes for this region, but our hopes for peace and cooperation in the world, precisely because eventually the Russians in order to justify the kind of coercion that will be necessary to run this part of the world in the ways that they seemed to do, they will not be able to find the Estonians a sufficient enemy. It will be necessary to have a larger enemy. I submit that China and Islam will not ultimately work in that direction and that I think they will turn once again to the West.

I was in Moscow just after being in Estonia, and I can tell you that the people I talked to increasingly reflect anti-Western, not yet anti-American, but anti-Western, attitudes because we have talked too much, gave too many improving speeches, and not sent very much aid.

Now, what should we do? It's been less than 1,000 days since the end of the Soviet Union. And, unfortunately, neither we nor the Russians have made especially good use of that time. A lot of things that would have been possible two years ago are not possible now, but I think there are three things we need to do.

First, I think we really have to treat all the countries of the region as countries. I know that sounds very primitive, but the fact is we don't. The fact is that we have treated them always through a Russian optic, even if it is through embassies on the territory of these particular countries. Indeed, our government has chosen to organize its bureaucracy with respect to this part of the world in the State Department, in the Office of Independent States, and Commonwealth affairs, which once again signals that for us it is a place, not 12 places plus the 3 Baltic countries.

Second, I think we've got to end our inverted approach to Russia. In the last two years, we have been so obsessed with what Russia does domestically, reforming the economy, making a transition to democracy, that we have largely ignored or been unwilling to speak out about what Russia does to her neighbors, exactly the reverse of the way in which we deal with most countries in the world. I think that's unfortunate. I think it should be reversed.

I don't think that Russia is going to have an easy time of making these transitions. I do think, however, if we wanted to integrate it into the world, that it's terribly important that it learns that the same rules that apply to everyone else apply to them.

And that is my third point, that we should stop allowing Moscow to assume, those in Moscow, and not just the extremists of the Zhirinovsky, but Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Kozyrev as well, that the ordinary yardstick of international law and international relations doesn't apply to Russia, that because of its size, it can get away with things.

Now, I recognize that we are in a normal post-struggle mode of not wanting to get too involved in the world, but even if we are not always able to enforce our principles, it seems to me it is terribly important that we articulate them and make it very clear where we stand.

We have not always done that. And, unfortunately, many people, especially in this town, have forgotten that the real source of American influence, not only in this part of the world, but everywhere else, is to be found not in our missiles, but in the values of this country.

I think we have to make them very clear. I think it's very important that it be done publicly and clearly, and I think that there are a lot of things that need to be said that haven't been said.

And I think the way to begin to do that is to get off of the question of "Is it an empire? Are we going back to the status quo ante?"; but, rather, "Is Russia playing by the rules with its neighbors?" And the answer tragically at the present time is not in every case.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you very much, Mr. Goble.

Mr. Suny?

**TESTIMONY OF RONALD GRIGOR SUNY, PROFESSOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

Mr. SUNY. Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here. I thank the Committee for reaching beyond the Beltway for some other opinions. We may have an interesting debate here this morning. My view is somewhat different from Mr. Goble's.

First of all, I would like to emphasize that one has to look at Russia as a huge country in an era of transition, of enormous flux and a country that is improvising its policies at the moment, different policies in different regions.

There has certainly been a shift from the policy of retreat to a policy of more clearly defining what's Russia's interests are. And this has gone on even before Yeltsin overthrew the Parliament in September of last year.

The second point I will make is that Russia's borders are very unstable, particularly the border in the North Caucasus and its

own idea of security requires dealing with those instabilities that exist on the other side of its current borders.

Certainly the most unstable border of the Russian Federation—this is by way of an example—lies in the North Caucasus, where local peoples are barely under the control of Moscow and at least one state, the Chechen republic Ichkeria has declared itself an independent state.

The volatile North Caucasus borders on one of the most unstable and strife-ridden regions to the south, where Georgians, Abkhaz, and Osetins have been fighting and where the long-running war between Armenians and Azerbaijanis is now in its sixth year.

Not only does Russia have military assets, bases, and equipment in the Transcaucasus, not only are Russian troops still guarding the border between Turkey and Armenia, but the fighting in Georgia and Azerbaijan involves peoples of the North Caucasus; that is, involves citizens of Russia proper. For instance, South Osetia, where Georgians and Osetins fought to a bloody stalemate, lies in the Georgian republic, while North Osetia is part of the Russia Federation.

Volunteers from the North Caucasus organized by the semi-official Confederation of the Mountain Peoples fought on the side of the Abkhaz against the Georgians.

And, more recently, Lezgins and other Daghestani peoples, who live on both sides of the Russo-Azerbaijani border, have expressed their desire to be united in a single state. And there have been clashes involving Azerbaijanis and Lezgins.

The point there is that ethnic struggles in the Near Abroad tend to bleed into Russia, and they cannot easily be contained outside. The most volatile, of course, would be that in Crimea, also one in northern Kazakhstan, which would involve millions of people who consider themselves, in one sense or another, to be somewhat related to Russia, Russian speakers.

The fragility of the southern tier of the former Soviet Union has encouraged other players to enter an area that Russia sees as its own backyard. While asserting its own hegemonic role in Transcaucasia and Central Asia, Russia has clearly opposed the designs of Turkey and Iran in the region and even been wary of the United States playing a mediating role without specific Russian invitation or acquiescence.

Russia, as it is being drawn into the inter-republic and ethnic conflicts of the former Soviet Union, whether it wishes to be or not, is seeking some kind of international legitimization for its forces in the Near Abroad, as well as financial support.

Interestingly enough, since the U.N. charter forbids peacekeepers to have special interests in conflict areas, the CSCE has been seen by some policymakers as Russia's only or most viable option for shaping a new security environment in the former Soviet Union.

By default, Russia is the only power that is able to play a peace-keeping role in many of these areas, particularly Transcaucasia and Central Asia.

The other states in the region might prefer alternatives to the Russian presence,—they generally do—but no other powers seem willing to engage troops in the area. And Shevardnadze has even said at one point "If you have alternatives, tell us what they are."

The dimensions of Russian interest in Transcaucasia and Central Asia, most importantly, are still unclear. Certainly, Yeltsin does not plan to reannex the region, but he is promoting a greater military and political presence, even hinting that Russia should be given some exclusive rights as gendarme in the area.

What might be called the Yeltsin Doctrine sees a paramount role of Russia in the southern tier of the former Soviet Union, but with a recognition of the independence and sovereignty of the existing states, along with his own explicit claim for dominance in the realm of security and perhaps a special role in protecting Russians and other minorities. I would be remiss not to point out that this is, of course, contradictory, but both goals have been articulated.

Russia also wants partnership in the exploitation and development of the natural resources of the region; most importantly, the off-shore oil in Azerbaijan.

This is all extraordinarily important for the United States because the most dangerous fallout from the conflicts outside Russia's borders is the growth of the neo-imperialist mentality and Russian chauvinism within the Russian political elites and among the population within the Russian Federation.

What are American interests and policies in this region? I think that recognizing the actual economic and strategic dependence of the countries of much of the Near Abroad on Russia and the overwhelming importance of Russia to global security concerns, the United States has essentially engaged in a Russia first foreign policy.

The best defense of that policy is that the greatest effort must be made to keep Russia on the path to democracy and the market for if Russia reverts to an authoritarian or really imperialist path, which I do not believe they have done yet, the future of all the other republics will be jeopardized.

American and European strategic interests in the former Soviet Union are to foster stability that will prevent the resurgence of a rearmed authoritarian, imperialist Russia.

Because ethnic conflict beyond Russia has the potential to draw Russia into confrontation with other states as well as fertilizing the soil within Russia for more nationalist and chauvinistic elements, the United States must be concerned not only with interstate conflicts in the former Soviet Union, but with internal ethnic conflicts and human rights abuses.

I'd like to argue that we should look at the former Soviet Union as an area of different Near Abroads, not as a single area. It would be easy enough to divide it up geographically, to see the Baltic as one area, Ukraine perhaps as another, and the southern tier of Transcaucasia and Central Asia as another. But I'm going to argue today that you might also divide the Near Abroad into areas of different kinds of conflicts.

Understanding that many Russians, inside and outside of government, have not yet shed their imperial mentality and that the non-Russian republics have a long legacy of fear and resentment of Russian power, the United States must be able to carry out a more nuanced policy toward the region, recognizing these different Near Abroads, different Russian interests, and, therefore, an opportunity for a more variegated American policy.

In the first area, in those areas where civil and ethnic war are now raging or have been raging, as in Tajikistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova, it may be, in fact, that Russian interests and local interests coincide, at least in the short run. Both sides want to end the conflict.

Here the United States can offer support to Russian efforts at peacemaking and peacekeeping and, indeed, can define what role Russia should play within the larger framework of the CSCE and, in fact, in a way teach Russia how this game is played.

In areas where ethnic and territorial issues lead to explicit or implicit conflict between Russia and the non-Russian republics,—I'm thinking here of areas like Estonia or Latvia, Kazakhstan, the Crimea, where there are large Russian minorities, where there is implicit a potential conflict with Russia and the non-Russian republics—the United States can play an important moderating or mediating role, much as the CSCE High Commissioner on Minorities in Estonia did last summer.

Should these disputes lead to open conflict, the United States would need to appear neutral and continue to offer its good offices for negotiation.

Finally, in areas where there are not at the moment or are likely not to be in the near future implicit conflicts between Russia and other republics,—I'm thinking here of Lithuania, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan—the United States can act more freely to promote its own values in consultation and co-operation with Russia. In no way do I see any military intervention by American forces as necessary in the near future or even further along the line, at least for this current government.

Solutions to problems in this area should, of course, be on the lines of the principles of CSCE and should guarantee what are often seemingly contradictory principles: national self-determination and territorial integrity. Both great powers work with existing governments, whether democratic or not, to ensure interstate peace and ethnic conflict.

Solutions both to the Abkhaz and Karabakh wars, both powers would probably agree, must be on the basis of the recognition of the existing borders and the rights of minorities. Armenians will, therefore, have to understand that Karabakh will remain within Azerbaijan *de jure*, while Azerbaijan must recognize that a democratic solution will give the Armenian majority in Karabakh *de facto* rule over the enclave.

Abkhazia will not be permitted by Russia or Georgia to separate from Georgia, but the Georgians will have to restore, protect, and probably amplify the rights and representations of the Abkhaz in their republic. Such solutions will ultimately in my view have to be imposed by Russia and sanctioned by the United States.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize again the point that we are dealing with a period of transition and flux, but also one of great opportunity, not a time to harden lines.

Even with its Russia first policy, the United States is not required either to embrace every domestic policy within the Russian Federation, as it seemed to do for most of 1992 and 1993, including the overthrow of the Parliament, nor accept the notion that Russia has *carte blanche* in all parts of the former Soviet Union.

Obviously Ukraine and the Baltic countries have a different valence in American and European strategic calculations than do Transcaucasia and Central Asia. And any pressure on these states would have particular repercussions on the special relationship between United States and Russia. But the United States should recognize that Russia has special interests and concerns that gravely affect its security in the post-Soviet space.

Though it does not seem so to her Western neighbors, Russia is actually at the moment a relatively benign state. It does not use its considerable local power to overthrow other governments: it has not forced changes in regime. It does not use force to change borders, though millions of ethnic Russians live on the other side of quite arbitrarily drawn borders.

It has, however, on occasion used its diplomatic, rhetorical, and even economic power to secure better terms for Russians living outside of Russia and to its own advantages. And it has used its power sometimes clumsily to deal with inter-republic ethnic and civil wars in other parts of the former USSR.

In its current weakness, and even disarray, the Russian state has permitted various military and political agents to act somewhat autonomously of central control, but to label every action by Russia imperialists or see them as attempts to reconstitute the Soviet Union misjudges a highly improvisational situation in which many actors, some quite independent of the Kremlin, have influence and even initiated policy.

This is a particularly fluid time in the post-Soviet space. And the future relations between the countries of the region are now being worked out. Russia means to have a special role in the post-Soviet region.

What that will be remains to be determined, but hard-line resistance to Russian interests in the region will only serve to reconstitute the divisions which marred the world for the 40 years of the Cold War.

Thank you.

Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Suny, thank you very much. Indeed, we have some real diversity here and some strong differences. I wonder if you would comment on Mr. Goble's remark—I believe this is what you said, Mr. Goble—that there's a question about whether or not Russia wants to expand and re-establish the empire, that there's some indication that that may be, and then there are other areas that it's not.

It seems to me that, even if that is not a national intention of Russia, it is certainly something that can be perceived, by us or anybody else, that it's their national intention.

If it's not their national intention,—and I guess that you think that it is not; it's a matter of stability and working with their neighbors—what do you think of Mr. Goble's observation that it's very unclear that it's not their intention?

Mr. SUNY. First of all, let me say that I respect Paul Goble very much and learn a great deal from him, and I don't disagree with many of his factual statements, but, rather, the overall interpretation.

In my view, intentions are the most difficult thing always in history and political science to grab hold of. What I'm trying to do in

my presentation is demonstrate that Russia has, whether it likes it or not, real concerns and real interests and worries about what's going on in the Near Abroad, particularly in the southern tier.

There will also be major problems soon in Crimea and possibly western Ukraine as well. It cannot afford not to be interested. It would be irresponsible for it not to be interested.

There are many in our country who think that it is irresponsible for the current government not to be interested in what's going on in Haiti. Well, events in the near abroad are, in effect, much more intimate to Russia's national well-being than anything going on in other parts of Latin America. And we understand how sensitive we are about that.

Russia cannot afford to neglect a situation like Tajikistan, where there are incursions from Afghanistan or a civil war is de-stabilizing a republic that was once part of the Soviet Union.

So my view is no, there is no empire-building here, but there is a very difficult period in which they are engaged in trying to redefine what will be their relationship with the southern tier. How can they help stabilize regimes in that particular region?

Where there are stable regimes, Russia does not interfere particularly. Where there are conflicts, then Russia is drawn into those conflicts, whether it wants to be or not.

Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Goble, would you like to comment on Dr. Suny's statement?

Mr. GOBLE. I think that it's very important to make the point he does that there are a wide variety of Russian behaviors around the periphery. And I think that some of them have been helpful. I said that in my statement.

On the other hand, there is a pattern of attitudes and actions which are very disturbing. As a recent USIA poll in Russia discovered, 74 percent of the population of the Russian Federation regret the demise of the USSR, 70 percent do not believe that the Ukrainian nation is separate from the Russian nation or that Ukraine should be an independent country.

Moreover, the discussions of ethnic Russians abroad and the confusion between ethnicity and citizenship, which not only informs the Russian right, but also the Russian liberals, who fail to make a distinction between citizenship and ethnicity, can only be discouraging and frightening to countries that are only a couple of years old.

That it is true that Russia would have an interest in promoting stability on its borders I have no doubt. I think I would disagree, however, that some of the instability on the borders has been independently generated or where there was no Russian involvement in the generation of those conflicts.

I think the history of the Abkhaz struggle suggests that Russian involvement was a lot earlier than just solution to the Abkhaz problem.

Moreover, in Moldova in the Transdneistria region, a region which I would remind you is only 24 percent ethnic Russian but which is invariably described as a Russian enclave, we have General Lebid in the 14th Army behaving in ways that are inappropriate abroad. And they could be stopped by the simple expedient of not paying Mr. Lebid and his forces if indeed that were Russia's

interests in doing so, just as Mr. Gorbachev failed to stop paying the black berets in the Amman and Lithuania and Latvia in early 1991.

I also think that the Russian involvement in Tajikistan has been extraordinarily complicated. It's been suggested here there were good and bad sides. But I think if you look at it, if you look at this as a totality, you have to understand why it is that many people around the periphery are frightened, especially in the absence of very, very clear statements about what is permissible and what is not.

The Government of Kazakhstan is reasonably stable, I think. And, yet, Russian involvement with respect to Kazakhstan's ability to export oil and gas across to foreign markets has been sharply limited by the Russian government with a demand for an equity stake, as has been the case in Azerbaijan, which had a government overthrown with, according to at least some reports, weapons that were received from the Russian army, not by Russian forces. I want to be very clear about that.

I think you have a track record of Russian statements about Crimea that are very unfortunate, very troubling. I think you have the behavior of the Russian government with respect to Belarus, a country which is also relatively stable demanding all kinds of concessions as part of this agreement for reincorporation into the ruble zone. I think the statements and—you know, who are we supposed to believe? That's the problem.

On April 7th, Mr. Yeltsin signs a decree. We're then told a few days later this decree is not real. You know, how are we to know and how are the peoples of this region to know what, in fact, Russian intentions are? I think it's very unclear.

I think it's really a mistake to discuss this issue in terms of: Are they going back to an empire status quo ante? The answer is no. But are they doing things, are Russian representatives, forces, whatever you want to call them, doing things, which we would find inappropriate if other countries were doing them? The answer is yes.

And I think that the use of the word "empire," just like the appearance of Mr. Zhirinovsky, has been the greatest thing that could happen to protect Russians doing exactly what they're doing because as soon as you can say they're not restoring the empire, the implication is there isn't a problem.

And I think that's a big mistake, just as as soon as people say, "No matter what Yeltsin or Kozyrev say, it isn't Zhirinovsky. Therefore, there's not a problem," I think we've got to move beyond that in assessing it.

I don't disagree with Ron Suny, whose views and knowledge of the Caucasus everyone who knows anything about this area has enormous respect for. I think there are places where Russia is doing useful things. I think there are statements of other Russian actions, other Russian statements, which can hardly be so construed.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you.

Congressman Hoyer?

Co-Chairman HOYER. Unfortunately, time for me is short. And this is a critical subject, particularly because I think we have at

least two perspectives, if not two different opinions here, where we need more time.

Let me read from Dr. Suny's statement. I noted, Dr. Suny, you followed the statement almost word for word in this paragraph except you left out the last sentence, which I found interesting. I don't know that it meant anything. "No military intervention by American forces is called for since the United States basically recognizes the former Soviet Union as primarily a Russian sphere of influence." Now, you did not use that sentence when you testified.

Mr. SUNY. You found me out.

Co-Chairman HOYER. What?

Mr. SUNY. You found me out.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Well, I was following you at least. I wasn't sleeping up here. You know, that at least demonstrates that, if nothing else.

I would like to hear both of you comment on: A) whether you believed that was Ambassador Collins' perception—my perception was that it was not—or, Mr. Goble, whether you believe that it is the tacit policy of the United States to recognize the Near Abroad as the sphere of influence of Russia.

Doctor, you might want to comment first. And I don't draw any implication by your leaving that out other than I see it as a pretty stark difference between what Ambassador Collins said and what you're observing.

Mr. SUNY. Well, I think I would stand by the statement. I think implicitly we have recognized the former Soviet Union as a Russian sphere of influence or, if you like, a Russian sphere of interest, which might be another way of putting it. That is, we understand that they have interests in this area which are distinct and much more intimate than ours. And I think that's what Ambassador Collins was saying earlier.

But there are different parts of that former Soviet Union. It certainly doesn't involve the Baltic, and we're unclear about Ukraine. We're more willing to concede that they have interests that are different from and more vital to them than to us in the southern tier.

So I might amend that statement with the remarks that I just made.

Co-Chairman HOYER. It seems to me Mr. McCloskey, Senator DeConcini, and I are very concerned, as you know, about Bosnia-Herzegovina. Everybody is concerned about it. I don't mean just us.

Milosevic would argue that he has a particular sphere of influence, that he has ethnic Serbians living adjacent to him, and that he is justified in his actions. I think he's a war criminal. I hope he's found as such, prosecuted as such, and incarcerated.

I don't know that that's going to happen, but I tend to lean towards, strongly, as you can tell, Ambassador Collins' presentation that we cannot recognize the old order of things in terms of what you seem to imply in the last sentence of your written statement.

You went on and had added some statements on the imposition of solutions. It seems to me a very tough imposition unilaterally by Russia with American sanction. That's the phrase you've used. I'd like to hear, Mr. Goble, your thoughts with respect to that and, Doctor, your thoughts as well.

And I will ask no other questions, but it seems to me this is a relatively discrete consideration of our relations with Russia. We heard earlier it's complicated. I'm very supportive of stabilizing Russia, that's very important to us and to our future and to the international community's future.

But it seems to me there are some very important principles here. And I liked Mr. Goble's statement, which I highlighted and am going to use in the Bosnian debate that we may or may not have in the near term, in which he says we should stop allowing Moscow to assume the ordinary yardstick in each case. We may not always be able to enforce our principles, but we should not forget them or fail to articulate them to others.

In that context, Mr. Goble, I'd like to hear your comments on Dr. Suny's perspective. And, Doctor, I don't think yours are unrealistic or not consistent with the facts that may be. So I don't want you to think that I'm critical in that respect.

MR. GOBLE. I'm someone who believes in the old saying that if it walks like a duck and quacks like a duck and swims like a duck, it's probably at least not a horse. And one of the things that I think we need to be very clear about is to imagine what our reaction would be if Russian government officials were to say the same thing about Finland or Poland that they routinely say about Ukraine or Kazakhstan.

The fact is our reaction would be very different. The Russians know it. And one of the reasons that the Russians behave in certain ways is because they know it.

One of the reasons, only one for sure, but one of the reasons, that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania have done relatively well since the end of the Soviet Union is precisely because the West has been very clear that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are real countries that we intend to treat as real countries.

I don't doubt that Ambassador Collins believes and certainly we have said often enough that we believe these are real countries and all of that, and we do say that. The fact is, however, our response to situations is very different between those countries that were part of the Soviet Union minus the three Baltic states and those countries that were on Russia's borders otherwise.

And, consequently, the peoples of this region—and that goes to the Russians as well as the non-Russians—are drawing conclusions from our actions or, more precisely, our failure to act.

When, for example, the President of the United States, as he did in January in Moscow, draws an explicit analogy between the defense of American citizens abroad and Russia's presumptive right to defend ethnic Russians abroad, given how few of those ethnic Russians are, in fact, citizens of the Russian Federation, whatever you want to say about how we recognize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all these other places, you have just sent a message, intended or not, that you don't view them exactly the same way.

And it is also the case, I would argue, I think that we should look at these countries the way we would look at Spain or at France. Obviously they have relations with their neighbors and this is important. But it's different to talk about those kinds of interstate relationships than the kind of relationships which, unfor-

tunately, many in the Russian government are insisting upon and demanding that the West accept.

It may be, as I concluded in my written testimony, that we're not going to be in a position to prevent certain things from happening, but that does not mean that we should not be very clear about what we believe to be true. I am very troubled by our failure to be clear on these issues.

And I just say compare American reaction to Russian statements about territory with respect to Japan, as opposed to Russian statements with respect to territory of Ukraine. It doesn't take too much imagination to see that anyone in Moscow who is reading what we're saying would believe that we do view these countries as something other than full-fledged members.

And one last point because it affects CSCE. The CSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, Mr. Max van der Stoel, whom I've had the pleasure of meeting several times, has talked about his need to intervene on the question of ethnic Russians abroad, in the Baltic countries and elsewhere.

I asked him when there was going to be a CSCE intervention on behalf of the 35 million non-Russians who live outside of their home countries or do not have their own country on the territory of the former Soviet Union. I was told, "That's not an issue for me to be involved with."

When you send a signal that some minorities are better than other minorities, are to be more protected and more attended to, that's frightening. For example, if there were significant closures of Russian language schools in Ukraine, I'm sure that this would be a subject for CSCE discussion. The fact that there has not been a single Ukrainian language school on the territory of the Russian Federation since 1934, not one, has not been an issue—not only have we not treated the two situations as equal, full-fledged countries, but we have not treated the ethnic question equally.

I have argued very often in the Baltic countries, where I spend a fair amount of time, that the Russian minorities must be treated as individuals with full human rights. But that is necessary to integrate them, and one has a right to insist that other governments behave the same way with respect to their minorities. That, unfortunately, has not happened.

We have been unwilling generally to make those demands of the Russian Federation. And I think that to the extent that continues, we weaken our influence in the region, rather than strengthen it.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Let me see if I read you right, at least on the central question. You are, as I understand it, essentially in agreement that, whatever we say, our actions do, in fact, recognize a sphere of influence, which is—

Mr. GOBLE. I think that is, unfortunately, the case. I'm delighted that there is a rhetorical record pointing in a different direction because that gives me hope that maybe we can strengthen that rhetorical record.

It is a mixed picture. And, just as in Moscow, where you can find evidence for any position you like, so, too,—

Co-Chairman HOYER. Here, too.

Mr. GOBLE. —over the last two years, it can happen here as well.

Co-Chairman HOYER. It happens all the time here.

Mr. GOBLE. Indeed.

Co-Chairman HOYER. It happens in the United States Senate voting on resolutions regarding foreign policy issues, as a matter of fact.

Mr. GOBLE. Indeed. Right.

Co-Chairman HOYER. It may happen here in the House.

Do the Russians accept your figures of 150,000?

Mr. GOBLE. Yes. That's a Russian government figure. There are 150,000—

Co-Chairman HOYER. In addition to 650,000 who are not citizens

Mr. GOBLE. Well, it's just under 800,000. There are 422,000 ethnic Russians and others in Latvia—there's no naturalization law in Latvia yet—and roughly 370,000 ethnic Russians in Estonia who do not, although there are ethnic Russians in both cases who are citizens of those two countries. So you're talking about 24.5 million of the 25.4 million are, in fact, citizens of other countries.

And in a very useful development, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* now has a monthly series, a monthly page, devoted to ethnic questions. The lead article in the first issue of that, which I guess is now 3 months ago, by Valery Tishkov, the Director of the Institute of Ethnology in Moscow, the Academy of Sciences, began by saying "It is simply irresponsible to talk about the Russians abroad as if they were citizens of our country. In fact, we are talking about millions of co-ethnics who are citizens of other countries."

The number 150,000 was released by the Foreign Ministry in a Foreign Ministry press conference roughly a month ago. So it might be a little higher, but that's ballpark and it's their figure, not mine.

Chairman DECONCINI. Thank you.

Dr. Suny?

Mr. SUNY. It seems like we're dealing in three levels here. One is the level of rhetoric; another, the level of principle, you might say; and then the level of empirical reality.

And I'm really trying to stay at the last level. It's not the one I feel most comfortable with, but I'm trying to describe a situation as I think it really exists in the former Soviet Union and in the context of American policy there.

First of all, there are a couple of things that should be said up front about that. One, yes, these are real countries in the sense that they're recognized and members of the United Nations.

But, short of that, these are countries that are highly unstable, that don't have well-established political classes or political elites, that are deeply divided, that are not fully formed nations, whatever they look like from the outside, and whose borders are in a sense provisional. The borders are legal and to be respected, but they were formed under very artificial situations.

It is the case, therefore, that in such situation, that Russia, whether it likes it or not, again, is called into those countries. Georgia is a good case here. Let's look at Georgia. Representative McCloskey asked about Georgia earlier. Russia did stir and muddy the waters in Georgia or some Russians did in Georgia, no question about it, but in fact Abkhazs were unhappy with living in Georgia already way back in the 1970's. They had asked to join Russia, rather than stay in Georgia. Under Soviet conditions, the Soviet government refused.

There was a war in Georgia against Abkhazs, between the Georgians and the Abkhazs. Some Russians took advantage of that war and aided the Abkhazs.

At the moment the Yeltsin government in very complex relations with the Shevardnadze government is actually moving towards a pro-Georgian position which is antagonizing North Caucasians, citizens of Russia who prefer Abkhazia. So this is a very complex situation.

Whatever Russia does in Georgia is going to affect its own relations with its own nationals in the North Caucasus. So this is not a question, it seems to me, of empire-building, but of a very difficult inter-ethnic and interstate problem that has to be looked at very carefully.

In the Azerbaijani-Armenian situation, it seems to me that Russia is acting relatively responsibly. It may want certain advantages out of this, some claim over Azerbaijani oil exports, bases in the region, et cetera.

I don't think this is abnormal for great powers, by the way, especially near their borders and in post-colonial situations. But what it is doing, in fact, is trying to get the two sides to sign an agreement which the Azerbaijanis are somewhat hesitant about signing at the moment.

It seems to me that the two sides will never come together on the battlefield unless the Russians intervene. It seems to me that we don't necessarily in principle or in rhetoric have to recognize that there is a sphere of influence or interest of Russia in the former Soviet Union. That would be unnecessary.

On the other hand, it seems to me de facto we do concede that Russians have primary interests in these regions, particularly in the south.

It seems to me that we may want to withhold laying down principles or drawing lines in the sand at this point. We may soon be faced with a very difficult situation in the Crimea. The majority of Crimeans are expressing interest in actually joining Russia.

At the same time, as Paul Goble pointed out, a very large body of public opinion, almost three-quarters of the Russian population, is very interested and concerned about Russians living abroad.

If the Yeltsin government is democratic,—and in many ways it's more democratic since December, of course, than it was before December—it must respond to public opinion, as we all in this room are perfectly aware.

If that opinion is, in fact, far to the right, far more imperialistic or concerned, let's say, about Russians abroad than the government even is, it must make some adjustment to that reality.

It seems to me that it would be very, very short-sighted and very, very dangerous for the United States to hobble or to pressure the Yeltsin government when it is trying to walk through this mine field of relations with Russians abroad and ethnic conflicts and civil conflicts on its borders.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Doctor.

Chairman DECONCINI. Congressman?

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Senator.

Maybe one question for somewhat separate but I think related areas to each panelist. And I want to say to Mr. Goble I always

find him a delight as far as both clarity and subtlety. I was thinking, in my subjective opinion, you're about the best public thinker I know of, Paul, on these issues, and I really appreciate that.

Co-Chairman HOYER. Can you talk about the private thinkers later on?

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I guess you have a course, don't you, on Wednesday nights?

Mr. GOBLE. Yes, I teach a course, too. Yes.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. We may talk about that if I can arrange the House schedule or whatever.

Paul, what's your comment on Russians and the Balkans right now? You know, the experience in Croatia, the fact that they're helping right now in the partition in the so-called peacekeeping in Sarajevo and elsewhere, as you know, some people in the Balkans and elsewhere see a great opportunity for them in the Adriatic, so to speak.

Is this benign? Was that necessary? What are your observations pro and con on that?

Mr. GOBLE. Well, I think that what you have is a variety of Russian calculations. On the one hand, there is a desire to pander to public opinion in Russia, which talks about pan-Slavism.

And I think we could agree that not every government should respond to every public mood, especially if that public mood is to do something illegal against neighboring countries. But the fact is that there is a lot of support in Russia for not doing anything against Serbia.

And the Russians wanted to get involved first, to reinforce the idea that Russia is a great power and that everything that happens in the world, Russia has got to be involved in.

Second, I think that the Yeltsin government saw a way of sending a message to the Russian right that by supporting Serbia, we're really supporting this traditional pan-Slavic enterprise.

And, third, I think the Russians have an interest in demonstrating their ability to project power beyond the borders of the former USSR, of which this is a part.

Now, I think the Russians got caught. I think, like so often when a power gets involved, the tail starts wagging the dog, that Milosevic, having gotten the Russians to support him, decided that the Russians were now committed and he would see how far he would go.

And I share with Congressman Hoyer the judgment that Mr. Milosevic is a war criminal. And I very much hope that he will be brought to justice.

I also very much hope that recognizing that what the Serbs have been doing, in Bosnia and elsewhere, is a fundamentally criminal enterprise and it is extremely dangerous to dignify what they have done by imposing or trying to find a simple agreement which gives benefits to aggression.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Right.

Mr. GOBLE. Many people in Russia, just to finish one more thought on that, see the West's failure to stand up to the Serbs in Bosnia as being a very clear message that if the West would not stand on the side of the Bosnians against Serbian aggression, that they would never do anything against Russia and the Russian

thrust to the south, which we should remember is Mr. Zhirinovsky's latest contribution to thought.

And I think that the Russians find themselves being manipulated by the Serbs. And I think they don't know how to get out, and I think they're looking to us to find some convenient way to help them get out of a situation which they rapidly found that they couldn't control either.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you. I agree with everything you said.

Just one comment. Do you think they consciously desire some Adriatic access, Moscow itself?

Mr. GOBLE. I think it's less in terms of a specific Adriatic access than to reinforce what they have been trying to suggest, that the former Soviet empire, external empire; that is, the East European countries, are also part of a Russian sphere of influence, that not only the USSR, but the countries of the former Warsaw Pact, the Russians have insisted on a veto with respect to NATO membership, I think this is also part of that.

Yes, I think they're interested in access to the Mediterranean. I think we had better start looking at maps when we start agreeing to the idea that the pipeline from Kazakhstan ought to go through to Novorossisk and put on super tankers and go through the straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, which has other kinds of political consequences.

Certainly they're interested in access, but they're more interested, I think, in sending a message that they are going to be the dominant player in this part of the world. I think that other is a long-term interest.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Maybe for Mr. Suny, I don't know if this is a good question or something that's a little bit redundant or to the side, but it just seems to me, both as to the Balkans and as to your area, the Caucasus, whether we want to call it Transcaucasus or whatever—I've never been in that particular region, but all of the reports are increasing in stability in Turkey, economic, social, all sorts of ways. There's an aura in some of the reports of possible greater instability to come.

Can that be a deteriorating or complicating factor as to your concerns in that region? Is there a chance of any negative Turkish spillover if things got any worse?

I know there's some now, of course, with the Kurdish situation and other factors.

Mr. SUNY. Well, a year or so ago Turkey was fairly active under Ozol in trying to increase its influence in the southern tier of the former Soviet Union. That seems not to have worked.

There's been some resistance by countries in that area, government change, as in Azerbaijan. A more pro Turkish government fell under Elchibey, and Aliev came back and began to get closer to Russia. The Russians then began themselves to move back in and make it more difficult for Turkey to increase its interest in the region. And the Turkish prime minister, Ciller, has actually complained to President Clinton about Russia's moves in the area.

It seems to me there's enough instability, economic and political now as well as the war with the Kurds in Turkey, that Turkey will not be that active or as active as it has been in areas outside of Turkey.

I'd like to add just one more point here. Of all the governments we are likely to have in Russia, the Yeltsin government is certainly to my imagination the most benign and the one that will be the least imperialist.

And if we begin to think of this government as imperialist, then one only has to wonder what will follow. And if, in fact, we drive Russia into a box and don't recognize its complex relationship with the countries around which it lives and which were a part of a larger entity only a few years ago—and, by the way, countries, many of which themselves want different kinds of relations, closer relations, with Russia we will be forgetting that there is not only a centrifugal and antagonistic relationship between Russia and the non-Russian republic, but there are also close ties.

Byelorussia is actually moving back toward Russia at some cost to Russia. Tajikistan has asked for a different kind of relationship. Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan is talking about a Eurasian union of some kind with common citizenship.

In other words, this sphere, whether it's a sphere of interest or influence, is a kind of unique area, leaving the Baltics out. And the way it will finally shape up is very unclear at the moment. It seems to me that the United States should be at least cautious, particularly the Congress, about pushing Russia too far in one direction or another.

Thank you.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman DECONCINI. Mr. Goble, let me pursue one. There are so many very, very important provocative thoughts here, but Dr. Suny raises the question of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. As I understand, now the Armenians occupy or control about a third of Azerbaijan,—

Mr. GOBLE. That's correct.

Chairman DECONCINI. —including most of Nagorno-Karabakh, if not all.

Mr. GOBLE. That's correct.

Chairman DECONCINI. Who else but the Russians could impose a settlement there that would not reward Armenia for taking another country's territory and at the same time would impose autonomy within Azerbaijan for the Nagorno-Karabakh area but the Russians?

So is there legitimacy? And you did point out that this is one area that may be different. Is there legitimacy in Dr. Suny's position that yes, Russia should do that and will do that? Is that what your position was, Doctor?

Mr. SUNY. They are doing it.

Chairman DECONCINI. They are doing it. Well, they're trying to get a cease-fire. Is that correct?

Mr. SUNY. Yes.

Chairman DECONCINI. And what's your response to that?

Mr. GOBLE. Well, as I said, we may welcome what they're doing in one area.

Chairman DECONCINI. Do you think that would be a wise thing to welcome?

Mr. GOBLE. I do not believe that the Russians are going to succeed in imposing a peace.

Chairman DECONCINI. You don't?

Mr. GOBLE. They may very well impose a cease-fire. They may very well impose an armistice. But they will not—

Chairman DECONCINI. Enable a peace.

Mr. GOBLE. A peace would require that each side walk away without grievances that would have to be restrained in the future. And the—

Chairman DECONCINI. Let me interrupt you a minute. You don't think a peace could be of such a nature that Nagorno-Karabakh would be able to govern itself within the Azerbaijan—

Mr. GOBLE. I don't say that's impossible.

Chairman DECONCINI. But you don't think so?

Mr. GOBLE. I don't think it's likely.

Chairman DECONCINI. Yes.

Mr. GOBLE. I think the demographics, the geography, the history make that very difficult. I believe that it is important that Russia may very well impose something on this area and it may very well be true that if ending the fighting is the highest goal, that there isn't any way to have that happen soon. I accept that.

The question, however, is whether an imposed settlement survives without continuing use of force to make sure that it survives. I'm not opposed to a settlement in this part of the world, but I would like to see us get a settlement where we're not talking about the need to use enormous amounts of coercive resources, anybody's coercive resources, to keep it in place, and especially coercive resources which are increasingly going to be viewed by both sides as an imperial restoration.

Chairman DECONCINI. Indeed they will be.

Mr. GOBLE. Yes.

Chairman DECONCINI. But what alternative is there if you want to keep the CSCE principles that one country cannot take another country's territory, no matter what?

Now, here you have Russia maybe imposing a settlement, but not taking territory; whereas, if you don't do that, you have Armenia violating that principle and you have Azerbaijan violating the principle of human rights within Nagorno-Karabakh.

It's a dilemma. And the only reason I raise it is, thinking through it, I have to conclude that what Dr. Suny says is the only thing that can happen there, good or bad.

Mr. GOBLE. No, it's not the only thing that can happen. It is what will likely happen because Russia has broader interests in the region than just this war and just the solution of this war. There are various possibilities, at least imaginable, in terms of a negotiated settlement.

One of the things I think is important to mention here is we talked just a few minutes ago, and Dr. Suny said this a number of times, that the borders in the former Soviet Union were very artificial and that Crimea has a Russian majority and somehow that that should make us less certain about the possibility of what these borders mean.

Does it only work when the Russians are going to be asking for something? Does no one else have a right to make similar kinds of

things? Because the CSCE rules, as you know, suggest that borders cannot be changed by force. They can be changed, however, if there is an expressed will and acceptance and negotiated settlement.

I got in more trouble than any time in my life by suggesting that there should be a territory swap in the Caucasus as a way of getting a settlement. And it's delightful to be denounced in every country that's involved, as I have been for the "Goble" plan, which suggests a territorial swap.

I still believe, I said at the time and I believe to this day, that there are only three outcomes to this war. The first is that one side wins, and it won't be Armenia in the long term given the numbers. It just won't be in the long term. In the short term, yes. In the long term, it won't. The numbers are not there. The resources are not there in the absence of outside aid.

Second, the restoration of order through an outside force, an imposed, as you said, settlement. And the third is a negotiated settlement where each side walks away thinking they didn't lose everything, that it got something as well as it lost.

What concerns me is not what happens just the day we get a cease-fire in the Caucasus, but the kind of political and military arrangements that will be necessary to enforce it over the long period of time.

Are we really prepared—and I think it's a question we should be talking about—to have a large military force, a Russian military force, I think we all concede that—that will be there in that area imposing a cease-fire for a very long period of time given the other things that the Russians have said they want as side payments?

I do not think that is a recipe for long-term stability either. And I think there is a tendency in these crises to focus on getting to a cease-fire without asking "Once you have a cease-fire, what happens the next day?"

The Soviet Union was a remarkably stable place because it was incredibly coercive. And when it stopped being coercive, it stopped being stable. If stability is the highest goal, then you are saying some things about other CSCE principles, about the ability of countries to have self-determination and to reflect the views of their citizens.

It is not impossible to make a choice, obviously, but it's important to recognize that one often is and that if we're prepared to be happy with the idea of a permanent occupation force to impose a cease-fire, then—

Chairman DECONCINI. Yes. I'm not saying I'm happy.

Mr. GOBLE. No.

Chairman DECONCINI. But what real alternative is there? I don't see one, and I wish I did.

Mr. GOBLE. Well, as I say, I still believe that the two sides have a common interest, which is to remain independent states, whether they see it as that or not.

Chairman DECONCINI. Yes. Maybe given that occupational force there of Russians, which I can't believe the Azerbaijanis would like to have either,—

Mr. GOBLE. No.

Chairman DECONCINI. —except for the satisfaction of keeping the territory, maybe that will force them. But it doesn't seem to be

doing it. I don't like it. What Dr. Suny said, you know, offends me, but when I think about it, I think it's probably realistic as the only thing that's going to happen there.

Mr. GOBLE. Well, no. I agree that this is what is happening. I just want everyone to recognize what it means.

Chairman DECONCINI. I understand. Yes.

Mr. GOBLE. And it is that when we say "impose a settlement," we are not saying "reach a peace,"—

Chairman DECONCINI. Yes

Mr. GOBLE. —that this is the first stage of a very long process.

What worries me is that there's going to be a tendency, I fear, in the West the minute there's a cease-fire that's imposed to say it's over.

Chairman DECONCINI. Yes.

Mr. GOBLE. And that, I would argue, is a recipe for a new disaster in very short order.

Chairman DECONCINI. Yes. Well, thank you, gentlemen, very much. Your statements were very, very helpful. And your discussion here certainly indicates the complexity of this whole area and the importance of the United States to stay on top of it and to be cautious but to try to formulate a policy. And I wish I felt better that we had a policy, but I'm afraid I'm not the one who makes that policy. Thank you very much.

The committee will stand in recess.

[Whereupon, the foregoing matter was concluded at 12:05 p.m.]

Russia's Relations with the States of the "Near Abroad:"

The End of Retreat and its Implications

for American Foreign Policy

Ronald Grigor Suny

Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern Armenian History  
Acting Director, Center for Russian and East European Studies  
The University of Michigan

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## THE RETURN OF RUSSIA

Voice are being raised on Capitol Hill fearful that Russia is reverting to its old imperialist ambitions. The Clinton administration shuns this interpretation and embraces President Yeltsin, who for the first two years of his government rejected empire and engaged in a policy of withdrawal from the other republics of the former Soviet Union. Yet even before Yeltsin overthrew parliament on September 21, 1993, Russia had clearly indicated that its hesitation and retreat in the countries of the "Near Abroad" was coming to an end. For over a year, from the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union (end of 1991) until the summer of 1993, Russia's foreign policy toward its closest neighbors was, in the words of one of its most outspoken critics, based "on the erroneous conclusion that Russia should turn inward, within the borders of the Russian Federation, get out of all the former USSR republics, not interfere in interethnic and regional conflicts in the former Union and not facilitate the internationalization of the process of resolving these conflicts, thereby openly and publicly renouncing any special rights and interests in the post-Soviet space outside the Russian Federation." The debilitating conflicts within the Russian political elite had for the twenty-five months of the "first Russian republic (August 1991-September 1993) made a consistent and coherent policy toward the "Near Abroad" impossible. But with Yeltsin's move against the opposition and his closer alliance with the military, Russia has made it clearer that it considers the territory of the former Soviet Union to be an area of its vital interests. The retreat is over, but rather than building a new empire, the Russian government is itself engaged in an intense and complex consideration of what its future relations should be with its closest neighbors.

Just as Western nations differentiate between their interest in and concern for different parts of the former Soviet Union, so Russia does not treat

the Baltic, Ukraine, Central Asia, and Transcaucasia as a single region. There are different "near abroads," both geographically and in terms of the immediacy of Russia's interests. Russia's policies are also affected by its perception of Western sensitivity and concern for the various non-Russian republics. The relative success of Russian troops in Transdneistria and Tajikistan in ending ethnic and civil conflict encouraged policy makers and politicians to think more positively about the use of force outside Russia's borders, but some areas are felt to be more open to the use of Russian arms than others.. While more caution is expressed in dealing with Ukraine and the Baltic states, Russia feels it has a freer hand in the southern tier of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Toward the southern tier (Transcaucasia and Central Asia), Russia has repeatedly stated that it considers this region a sphere of influence of a particular type, "a zone of vital interest," in the words of Foreign Minister Kozyrev. Conflicts in Transcaucasia and Central Asia, which the local governments have been unable to settle, inevitably affect Russian security interests and encourage more militarist options both by independent military and political actors and the central government.

The Russian Federation is as new a state as any of the other fourteen heirs of the Soviet Union. Not for centuries as any Russia been as diminished territorially as Yeltsin's Russia at present. Its borders are unstable, porous to refugees, smugglers, and criminals, and instabilities on the other side of the frontier bleed profusely into Russia itself. Certainly the most unstable border of the Russian Federation lies in the North Caucasus, where local peoples are barely under the control of Moscow and at least one state, the Chechen Republic-Ichkeria has declared itself an independent state. The volatile North Caucasus borders on one of the most unstable and strife-ridden regions to the

south, where Georgians, Abkhaz, and Osetins have been fighting, and where the long-running war between Armenians and Azerbaijanis is now in its sixth year.

Not only does Russia have military assets, bases and equipment, in the Transcaucasus, not only are Russian troops still guarding the border between Armenia and Turkey, but the fighting in Georgia and Azerbaijan involves peoples of the North Caucasus, that is, citizens of Russia. South Osetia, where Georgians and Osetins fought to a bloody stalemate, lies in the Georgian republic, while North Osetia is part of the Russian Federation. Volunteers from the North Caucasus, organized by the semi-official Confederation of the Mountain Peoples, fought on the side of the Abkhaz against the Georgians. The rebellious General Dudaev of the Chechen Republic, an irritating thorn in Yeltsin's side, gave refuge to and supported the former Georgian president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, after he was overthrown and has opposed the Shevardnadze government. Dudaev has called for a union of Muslim nations of the former Soviet Union and supports the Abkhaz against the Georgians. Moreover, Lezgins and other Daghestani peoples, living on both sides of the Russo-Azerbaijani border, have expressed their desire to be united in a single state, and recently demonstrations led to armed clashes involving Lezgins and Azerbaijanis.

Whether Russia acts cautiously or aggressively, ethnic conflicts in the Near Abroad are not easily contained outside the republic. Moscow remains concerned about new waves of refugees from strife-torn areas into Russia, particularly from Central Asia, not to mention the fate of the twenty-five million ethnic Russians living outside Russia proper. The issue of the Russian diaspora has provoked right-wing chauvinism of the Zhirinovskii type, but much more moderate people are also concerned about humiliations and discriminations that ethnic Russians believe they suffer in Central Asia and the Baltic states. The

Yeltsin government finds it impossible to ignore the overwhelming public opinion concerning orphaned Russians in the Near Abroad, especially since more conservative elements won significant representation in the new parliament. Even as it avoids provocative statements, Russia must deal with the expressed interest of the heavily-Russian region of Crimea to increase its autonomy within Ukraine.

Tens of thousands of Russian soldiers and officers serve outside the Russian Federation: 12,000 in Ukraine; at least 25,000 in Belarus; about 7,000 in Latvia; 2,500 in Estonia; several thousand in Transdneistria (Moldova), separating Slavs from Moldovans; several thousand in Georgia, separating Abkhaz from Georgians; 9,000 in Armenia, guarding the border with Iran and Turkey; several thousand in Azerbaijan guarding oil-industry facilities and a radar station; up to 24,000 in Tajikistan, keeping civil peace, backing the pro-Communist government, and guarding the republic against Afghan incursions; 15,000 in Turkmenistan, 5,000 in Uzbekistan, and 3,500 in Kyrgyzstan guarding the borders with Iran and China.

The fragility of the southern tier has encouraged other players to enter an area that Russia sees as its own backyard. While asserting its own hegemonic role in Transcaucasia and Central Asia, Russia has opposed the designs of Turkey and Iran in the region, and even been wary of the United States playing a mediating role without specific Russian invitation or acquiescence. In the fall of 1993, both Georgia and Azerbaijan, unable to solve their own internal ethnic conflicts, acceded to Russian pressure and agreed to enter the Commonwealth of Independent States, now increasingly dominated by Yeltsin's Russia. Russia repeatedly claimed the right to protect rail lines in Transcaucasia, for the major link from Russia to Armenia passes through Abkhazia and Georgia.

Russia is being drawn into the interrepublic and ethnic conflicts in the former Soviet Union, whether it wishes to be or not, and it seeks some kind of international legitimization for its forces in the Near Abroad, as well as financial support. Since the United Nations charter forbids peacekeepers to have special interests in conflict areas, the CSCE is seen as Russia's only option. In September 1993, Russia requested a revision of the 1990 NATO-Warsaw Pact Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe that would allow it to increase the number of tanks and heavy weapons in the Caucasus. NATO interpreted the request as a sign of increased Russian military influence in Moscow decision-making circles. In early December Russia asked that its troops in trouble spots in the CIS be granted the status of CSCE peacekeeping forces, but the request was not acted upon. Ukraine, Estonia, some East Central European states, as well as Turkey, Canada, and Norway were opposed to the Russian request. Estonia spoke of a "new repartition of Europe, a new Yalta."

By default Russia is the only power that is able to play a peacekeeping role in Transcaucasia and Central Asia at the moment. The other states in the region might prefer alternatives to the Russian presence, but no other powers are willing to engage troops in the area. When his parliament and outsiders protested about Georgia's drift into the Russian sphere, Shevardnadze plaintively asked that his critics provide alternatives.

The dimensions of Russian interest in Transcaucasia and Central Asia are still unclear. Certainly, Yeltsin does not have plans to reannex the region, but he is promoting a greater military and political presence, even hinting that the United Nations should give Russia exclusive rights as gendarme in the area. What might be called the "Yeltsin Doctrine" involves recognition of the independence and sovereignty of the existing states, but calls for a paramount role of Russia in the southern tier of the former Soviet Union, an explicit claim

for dominance in the realm of security and, perhaps, a special role in protecting Russians and other minorities. Russia also wants partnership in the exploitation and development of the natural resources of the region, most importantly the off-shore oil in Azerbaijan. Russia has stated that it is not interested in the dismemberment of the republics of Transcaucasia or Central Asia, which could set "a most dangerous precedent" and lead to similar struggles in Russia, but the unresolved ethnic conflicts in the south draw Russia into conflicts not of its own making.

The popular and even governmental perception in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia is that Russia does not play a disinterested role in the conflicts of the region but has been primary in stirring up trouble. While there have been rogue operations by independent military and civilian actors that have exacerbated existing ethnic and civil problems, locals cannot deflect responsibility for the intensity and viciousness of the conflicts on to the Russians. There may be Russians who believe that as long as the Caucasian or Central Asian or Moldovan pots are boiling, Russia will have an excuse for presence in those areas. Instability, in this view, feeds Russian imperial ambitions. But more sober minds take into account the enormity of Russia's current internal and external problems and hold that stability on the borders is far more advantageous to Russia than unpredictable outcomes of uncontrollable conflicts. If Russia means to be a legitimate and effective hegemon in the Near Abroad, then it must appear to be able to solve problems, to bring peace and stability, and to be a reliable force for enforcement of settlements. Its record to date, particularly in Abkhazia and the Karabagh conflict, is spotted, and its current activity is most probably directed to establishing lasting ceasefires and eventual settlements.

Yeltsin in particular must be concerned about the political effects of a foreign policy that only continues conflict and the potential loss of Russian lives. The most dangerous fallout for him and for Russian democracy of protracted and seemingly insolvable ethnic and civil conflicts in the Near Abroad is the growth of a neo-imperialist mentality and Russian chauvinism within the Russian political elites and among the population that plays into the hands of his political enemies. For his own domestic opinion Yeltsin needs to appear as the responsible leader of a great power who can deal effectively with conflicts on his borders. But at the same time he cannot appear to be imperialist or expansionist, which would have a devastating effect on Western opinion.

#### AMERICAN INTERESTS AND POLICIES

Recognizing the actual economic and strategic dependence of the countries of the Near Abroad on Russia and the overwhelming importance of Russia to global security concerns, the United States has essentially engaged in a "Russia first" foreign policy. Yeltsin's Russia is seen as a partner of the United States, and here at least the Cold War policy of containment has been abandoned in favor of support of Russia's interests above other states in the region.

The best defense of the "Russia First" policy is that the greatest effort must be made to keep Russia on the path to democracy and the market, for if Russia reverts to an authoritarian or imperialist path, the future of all the other republics will be jeopardized. American and European strategic interests in the former Soviet Union are to foster stability that will prevent the resurgence of a rearmed authoritarian, imperialist Russia. Because ethnic conflict has the potential to draw Russia into confrontation with other states, as well as fertilizing the soil within Russia for more nationalist and chauvinist forces, the United

States must be concerned not only with interstate conflicts in the former Soviet Union but with internal ethnic conflicts and human rights abuses.

Even though all states in the former USSR benefit from a benign and democratic Russia, their interests do not always coincide with Russia's. Understanding that many Russians, inside and outside of government, have not yet shed their imperial mentality, and that the non-Russian republics have a long legacy of fear and resentment of Russian power, the United States might carry out a more nuanced policy toward the region, recognizing the different "near abroads" in the former Soviet Union. Though it would be difficult to state publicly, certainly the West is far more concerned with those states in the western part of the former Soviet Union, particularly Ukraine and the Baltic states, whose independence and security have a direct effect on their neighbors to the west and north. Though the United States is unlikely to give any security guarantees to those states, any unilateral military move against Ukraine or the Baltic states would most probably end the strategic partnership arrangement that the United States has been trying to build up with Russia. Central Asia and Transcaucasia are regions where the United States understands that Russia's interests are much more directly involved than those of the western powers, and though aggression in this area would also have an effect, the range of Russian options is far greater than in the western republics.

But geography is not the only definer of interests, opportunities, or policies. There are different "near abroads" in terms of stability and the potential for conflict. In those areas where civil and ethnic war rage (Tajikistan, Armenia/Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova), Russian interests and local interests (if we are dealing with rational actors) coincide, at least in the short run, in wanting to end the conflict. Here the United States can offer support to Russia's efforts, in so far as they are shown to be sincere, at peacemaking and peacekeeping.

The United States can assist Russia in its efforts by encouraging Moscow to think about using international forums, like the United Nations and CSCE, and by promoting the need for multinational peacekeeping and monitoring forces, rather than solely Russian forces.

In areas where ethnic and territorial issues lead to explicit or implicit conflict between Russia and the non-Russian republics (Russian minorities in Estonia, Latvia, and Kazakhstan, Crimea in Ukraine), the United States can play a moderating or mediating role (as did the CSCE High Commissioner on Minorities in Estonia last summer). Should those disputes lead to open conflict, the United States would need to state clearly its principles for settling disputes, appear to be non-partisan, and continue to offer its good offices for negotiation. Finally, in areas where there are no implicit conflicts between Russia and other republics (Lithuania, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan), the United States can act more freely to promote its own values in consultation and cooperation with Russia. No military intervention by American forces is called for, though some participation in joint peacekeeping and monitoring operations would be valuable. The United States does not in principle accept that the former Soviet Union is a Russian sphere of influence, but at the same time it can accept the idea that Russia's legitimate security and economic interests are much more intimately involved in the former Soviet Union than any other power and that the region does, in that sense, constitute in the eyes of the Russian government a "sphere of interest."

Believing as it does that independence, democracy, and capitalism will lead to a more prosperous and stable world, the U. S. government has attempted to link its security interests with its basic ideological values. This is particularly difficult to implement in Transcaucasia and Central Asia where formal democracy, political stability, and promotion of market economy seldom

coincide. The United States has favored Armenia, the most democratic and stable state in the region, giving it more aid per capita than any other former Soviet republic (Kyrgyzstan is second), though it has criticized Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan outside of Karabagh. In Azerbaijan, where democracy has proven much more vulnerable to military force, the United States has been unwilling to grant Azerbaijan the same trade privileges as Armenia, as long as it maintains the economic blockade of its neighbor. While the Freedom Support Act bars the United States from giving direct aid to the Azerbaijani government, some economic assistance is being passed through the Red Crescent. Despite the dubious constitutionality of Edward Shevardnadze's return to power in Georgia, Americans supported him over the legally elected but unpredictable Zviad Gamsakhurdia. With Gamsakhurdia an apparent suicide at the end of 1993, and Shevardnadze clearly the most conciliatory force in Georgia, the betting seems to have paid off.

Given its limited resources in the region, and a growing reluctance to be pulled into conflicts far from home, the United States is likely to work in partnership with Russia in the former Soviet Union. Russia should be aware that any use of force to dictate its will in the other sovereign states would seriously jeopardize the special relationship it has built up with the West. All the Great Powers have been willing to work with the existing governments, whether democratic or not, to insure interstate peace and end ethnic conflict. But in states that are unable to solve their own internal problems, Russian involvement, economically, politically, and militarily, is likely. The pull is irresistible, and given the potential consequences non-involvement would be irresponsible. For Russia not to act in some cases would be as disastrous as intervening without cause.

When Russia acts, basically to re-establish peace and end conflict, as in the present conflicts in Transcaucasia, the United States should be able to support such efforts. Solutions to the Abkhaz and Karabagh wars, both Great Powers would probably agree, must be on the basis of the observing of two seemingly-contradictory principles -- recognition of existing borders and the rights of minorities. The Armenian enclave of Karabagh will have to remain within Azerbaijan *de jure*, while Azerbaijan will have to recognize that a democratic solution will give the Armenian majority in Karabagh *de facto* rule over the region. Autonomy for Karabagh will probably be enhanced (demilitarization of the Lachin corridor, local armed forces under Armenian control, perhaps dual citizenship for the Armenians of Karabagh), but full rights of return for Azerbaijani refugees must also be guaranteed.

Abkhazia will not be permitted by Russia or Georgia to separate from Georgia, but the Georgians will have to restore, protect, and probably amplify the rights and representation of the Abkhaz in their republic. Regretably, such solutions will not come from the immediate participants in the conflicts but will require a degree of imposition by Russia and sanction by the United States.

Even with its "Russia First" policy, the United States is not required either to embrace every domestic policy within the Russian Federation (as it seemed to do for most of 1992-1993) nor accept the notion that Russia has *carte blanche* in all parts of the former Soviet Union. Russia must understand that Ukraine and the Baltic countries have a different valence in American and European strategic calculations than do Transcaucasia and Central Asia, and any pressure on these states would have immediate repercussions on the future relationship between the United States and Russia. But the United States and the West should recognize that Russia has special interests and concerns that gravely affect its security in the post-Soviet space, and even as Western-oriented a government

as Yeltsin's will act to maximize its security. Fortunately, at the moment, Russia does not feel particularly threatened from outside. As Kozyrev put it, "For the first time in Russia's history, it has no immediate or even potential military adversaries." But Russia does feel humiliated and is demanding respect. This once great superpower is in the process of readjusting to its reduced territory, stature, power, and influence in the world. The United States would err gravely if it reverted to Cold War images of Russian expansionism. The current period as transitional and is marked by much improvisation. Americans should avoid slights and insults, failures to consult with their partners, which can stimulate reactionary public opinion and aggressiveness as evidenced by the Zhirinovskii phenomenon. We know well what rivalry with Russia entails. Now serious thought and greater elaboration should be given to the question of what partnership with Russia means.

Though it does not seem so to her western neighbors, Russia is at the moment a relatively benign state. In part this is because it is so weak and divided internally; in part it is because of the Yeltsin program of reform and democratization. Rather than lumping together separate acts and statements of government officials and extra-governmental actors into an interpretative pattern of aggressiveness and imperialism, certain simple facts should be highlighted. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union Russia has not used her considerable local power to overthrow other governments or force changes in regime. It has not used force to change borders, though millions of ethnic Russians live on the other side of quite arbitrarily-drawn borders. Russia has, however, on occasion used its diplomatic, rhetorical, and even economic power to secure better terms for Russians living outside Russia, particularly in the Baltic countries. And it has used its power, sometimes clumsily, to deal with interrepublic, ethnic, and civil wars in other parts of the former USSR. In its

current weakness and even disarray the Russian state has permitted various military and political agents to act somewhat autonomously of central control. But to label every action by Russia "imperialist," or see them as attempts to reconstitute the Soviet Union, misjudges a highly improvisational situation in which many actors, some quite independent of the Kremlin, have influenced and initiated policy. This is a particularly fluid time in the post-Soviet space, and the future relations between the countries of the region are being worked out. Russia means to have a special role in what was the Soviet Union. What that will be remains to be determined, but hard-line resistance to Russia's interests in the region will only serve to reconstitute the divisions which marred the world for the forty years of the Cold War.

Ronald Grigor Suny

Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern Armenian History  
The University of Michigan

Born in Philadelphia of Armenian parents, Ron Suny was educated at Swarthmore College and Columbia University and taught at Oberlin College and the University of Michigan. His research has centered on the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union, especially the history of Transcaucasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia), as well as the revolutions of 1917, the social history of Stalinism, and the Cold War.

He is the author of:

The Baku Commune, 1917-1918: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).

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The Making of the Georgian Nation (Bloomington and Stanford: Indiana University Press and the Hoover Institution Press, 1988; British edition: London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 1989).

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He is currently working on a biography of the young Stalin, with emphasis on the nationality question, a survey history of the USSR, and an anthology on nationalism.



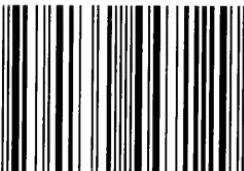
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